

CAROLS OF THE CAMP

BY A
CANADIAN
FORESTER



JOHN McDOUGALL

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Carols of the Camp.

THE FORESTRY CORPS.

From where Pacific's chinook blows snow blankets from the land,
To where boreal current throws ice floes upon the strand ;
From where beneath auroral blaze, the whale and walrus play,
To that mighty land where democrats and plutocracy hold sway ;
We've ploughed the foam for race and home, and girded for the fray.

We've climbed down from our spring boards with sharp saws nine
feet in length,
To add our little quota to our home battalion's strength.
Where cedars wave their gnarled fantastic branches to the sky,
And Douglas firs bear cone-shaped burrs, one hundred metres high ;
We left our engines, blocks, and lines, when we heard the battle cry.

From those timbered vales whose waters swell the vast Saint Lawrence tide,
From amongst their spruce and hemlock, pine and tamarack scattered wide,
From those shores where ocean's mightiest tide eternal ebbs and flows,
And where still in wild diffusion, small commercial timber grows,
We have come for cutting fetters, forged by our ruthless " Kultured " foes.

From railroad camps of logs or canvas ; mills that cut and send away
Lumber that would make a thousand two-horse wagon loads per day ;
From the vast primeval forest, still intact though scorched and culled,

We have come that Hohenzollern tyrant laws may be annulled.
We have come with vim and vigour,—tools whose edge is never dulled.

But not with bayonets and bombs, we fight in this campaign ;
Our weapons are the axe and saw, the peavy and the chain.
Though youth and vigour leave for scenes where armies strive and bleed,

Here we must stay where axes play to supply a vital need ;
So we rest content with the help we have sent, with efficiency and speed.

THE OCEAN TRIP.

(The *Baltic*, *Adriatic*, and *Empress of Britain*, escorted by the *Bake*, left Halifax for Liverpool on May 22nd, 1916.)

From the deck of the *Adriatic* on a sunny vernal morn,
Last we saw those frowning bastions, and the land where we were
born.

On the boat they gave us calisthenics, boat-drill, and parades,
And we helped to pass the hours on the deck with promenades,
So that, at the call of "First" or "Second sitting, gentlemen!"
We were lined up fit to tackle anything within our ken.

Save the porpoise and the petrel, little sign of life we found,
Till we struck the zone of danger; then destroyers zigzagged round;
Then with life-belts always on us, past those shores of shamrock rule,
Till the horizon showed the spires of Birkenhead and Liverpool.

ABOARD FOR BRAMSHOTT.

Soon we travelled through wide regions, all a garden or a park,
Where neat farmsteads stand in legions—home of the ivy, oak, and
lark.

'Mongst this teeming population a surprising thing is seen—
Little land in cultivation—nearly all in pasture green.
But this state of thing accords with iron economic law;
Evergreen fields suit for grazing; for grain, on dryer climes they
draw.

Soon we were passing through a "province," mostly brick, and
smoke, and grime,
Where the heart of Empire beating pulsates life through every clime.
Oh, that squalid, sluggish river, flanked by dome and palace fair!
It will bear some contemplation—"liquid history" flows there.

What a tangled maze of highways! Some, no doubt were first surveyed
By the bear and wolf and otter as through primal woods they strayed.
There we see the work of ages—architecture, sculpture fair—
Marred or ruined in slow stages by smoke and acid in the air.

But this gross, unmitigated waste of art, and waste of life
Soon may be ameliorated, when the nations cease from strife;
When Old England draws her power from a few well-chosen sites,
Will emerge her beauty's flower from environment that blights.
When such monstrous aggregations to garden cities are dispersed,
Brighter days will dawn for the nations brawn by slum conditions
cursed.

AT BRAMSHOTT.

In our bell-shaped tents we slumbered every night till reveille sound,
With our blankets round us and our rubber sheets upon the ground.
'Mongst the memories of Bramshott that indelibly remain
Are the standing at attention ; eating meals in wind and rain ;
Waiting for the fumigator while the breeze congeals your spine,
To destroy what the Creator took the trouble to design.
There sometimes we used to route-march by the Brook of Tennyson,
Under Liphook's Spreading Chestnut where The Blacksmith's work
was done.

There in evenings we sauntered along those semi-urban ways,
Where man's art, combined with Nature, woodland beauty well
displays.

There our Captain's honeyed speeches fell like music on the ear ;
The rare splendour of his diction spread its magic far and near.
If we lacked appreciation, 'twas because we could not climb
To such lofty elevation on the grub-line of that time.

IN BONNIE SCOTLAND.

Now we're in historic Scotia, land of the heather and blue-bell ;
Land of freedom that her wiry, hardy sons have defended well ;
Land of oatmeal, scones, and mutton, granite, solid masonry,
Ships, canals, and manufactures, enterprise and industry ;
Land of bagpipes, kilts, and tartans, highland flings and eightsome
reels ;
Fishermen, whose sturdy women market fish in giant creels.

Here our fellows used to handling tools and sawmills of to-day,
Watch with wonderment and awe these ancient relics under way ;
For we've come to serve their forests as we always serve our own,
While these Scotsmen cling to methods that the Druids had outgrown.

Every camp at its beginning lacks of everything but muck,
But the wheels of time a-spinning slowly brings us better luck ;
When construction work is ended—concrete baths and walks galore—
Every source of hardship mended—your stay there will soon be o'er.

Here these forests, set like orchards, native pine trees, larch and
spruce,
With some three score years' maturing, a good crop of logs produce.
All the vast "heath-mantled" hillsides once were clothed in forest
green,
And throughout these vales a heavy stand of hardwood trees was
seen.

But through settlement and fire and exigencies of war
Eroded braes, a prospect dire, mark the place where forests were:
Where the bear and wolf once wandered through a vast and track-
less wood,
Now are barren braes that furnish scattered flocks with scanty food;
But a better day is dawning, for a measure has been framed,
And the Mighty have decided that those wastes must be reclaimed.

SOME RANDOM REFLECTIONS.

When we see these neat plantations, free from windfalls and from
scrub,
Where the axe is laid upon *the root* and does not waste a stub,
Where the children come for little wagon-loads of broken boughs,
And no waste of roots or branches stern economy allows;
Oft our thoughts return to regions where Canadian timbers fall,
Where Nature's rich store is plundered—only the choicest used at all;
Where the brush is left, a fire-trap till some dry summer day,
When a few more miles of forest pass in smoke and flame away.
We think of virgin solitudes where the moose and deer roam free,
Where as yet no vandal hand intrudes to destroy their harmony;
We think of tangled jungles where the cougar creeps and crawls
Amongst a maze of fallen trunks in silence that appeals;
Of vales upon whose riotous waste eternal snows look down;
Of forest kings of a thousand years, that fire did uncrown.
When we survey this squandering of Nature's mighty store,
We think with pride and pain of the time when that waste will be
no more,
When every mountain, vale, and plain, from tide to timber line,
Will bring to bear its fullest share, conserved for man's design.

AT CASTLE DOUGLAS.

There we tented in the valley of a pretty little burn ;
Larch and pines, some forty thousand, into lumber we did turn ;
On a rough and rocky hillside rising from the valley green,
Are the stumps of a hundred acres where the plantation had been.

Oh those rains of Western Scotland! They're a blessing we abhor!
And those mists in splendid surges—may I meet them nevermore!
There one night in inky darkness, when our beds began to swim,
We coralled our few possessions ; waded through that vale abrim.

AT DORNOCH.

One cold day in early winter, by the vicissitudes of war,
We were sent to good old Dornoch, where the Hyperboreans are.
Here in the hotel we look out on an arm of the " German Sea,"
Where in the distant mine-field, U-Boats swim or sink invisibly.

Here we cut and decked the timber, larch, and spruce, and native
pine,
Logs in scores of thousands high up-piled with decking line.
Here the mermaids come from " Fishtown " sometimes nigh two
dozen strong ;
Shoulder monstrous fagot bundles—march in Indian file along.

Though the ground here seldom freezes ; zero weather hardly known ;
Never have I felt such breezes, blowing straight through flesh and
bone :
Give me, rather, minus sixty in that Western land of mine,
Where the snows don't melt in winter, nor the sun refuse to shine!

DIED BEFORE WE LEFT QUEBEC.

In our early days at Bramshott, records were a bit confused,
And our gallant Sergeant-Major found his patience much abused
By the " Jacks " who did not hunger for his military stuff
As a training for the forest where they had been trained enough.

Though to decking logs by numbers, no opposing point he scores,
 Still the " Jack " is not much struck on bringing timber down in fours.
 One fellow from slack attention failed to answer at roll-call,
 And the Sergeant-Major's anger heavy on that man did fall.

Mad was he then when Kilcollins failed to answer to *his* name ;
 From his eyes shone radiant fury ; with his breath came tongues
 of flame ;

But a brief investigation his deep wrath perhaps might check!
 From the ranks came information,—"*died before we left Quebec.*"

CAPTURING A DESPERADO.

(With compliments to Charles A. Cliff of Lark-Hill Camp.)

An M.P. on guard lest something should be spirited away,
 Saw a fellow hide some article inside his coat one day.
 Seeing him, the rascal bolted, and the famous chase began ;
 Over heath and gulch they jolted ; swift through copse and gorge
 they ran

Till, from his superb condition, the policeman won at last ;
 Overcame the desperado,—to the ground he pinned him fast ;
 Then he searched the wily scoundrel, while his breath came fast
 and thick,

And the property recovered was an old discarded brick!

ONE REASON FOR ENLISTING.

I have said we came to strengthen where the flag of Mars unfurls,
 But for some, the real magnets were the bonnie Scottish girls.
 Though this statement may be writ in verse it is no " poet's dream,"
 As attested by the records made where wedding jewels gleam.

Doubtless they are prompted by far-seeing patriotic zeal,
 For their country's urgent need of sturdy families they feel,
 That in future generations may spread o'er her wide domain ;
 That when future cataclysm rends this battered earth in twain,
 Canada may send the sinews that will right it once again.

So they " trip the light fantastic," utilise each leisure hour,
 Purchase sweets and gew-gaws for some sweet lass in her sylvan bower;
 Stroll among the honeysuckles,—promenade each shady lane,
 While the larks and linnets carol songs of love in language plain,
 And the very pines that glisten, murmur tales of Love's domain.

MULLIGAN.

In these penurious times of war
When gaunt starvation hovers o'er,
Economy rules more and more
 In oven, pot, and pan ;
So all the leavings of the mess,
And other things you might not guess,—
Some that no priests would care to bless
 Are kept for Mulligan.

Scrap of oatmeal, bread remnants, beans,
Pork, bullock, herring, skates, sardines,
From everywhere, by every means
 Meet in the Mulligan.
Scrap iron, leather, chips of wood,
Roots, lentils, spices, angel-food,
Cockroaches, earwigs,—all are good
 For making Mulligan.

One day we missed an old gray horse ;
We hunted far through woods and gorse :
Next day his teeth were found,—of course
 Amongst the Mulligan.
Australian mutton, “ kangaroo,”
And regions old, and regions new,
All must contribute to the stew
 That's known as Mulligan.

If you miss tobacco, shirt or boot
Or pet from realms of bird or brute,
Don't blame some innocent galoot
 But search the Mulligan ;
For everything that ever grew,
That ancient Noah ever knew,
That walked, or crept, or swam, or flew,
 Is in the Mulligan.

CHURCH PARADE.

In the army still survive some curious anachronisms,
Relics from the days of sword and flame, for heresies and schisms.
Still persists the old-time spirit, where our army rules are made,
As exemplified too often by compulsory Church Parade.

We went into training quarters in a good old English town,
Where they drilled us, and they grilled us, till we felt like falling
down ;
And our only hope of respite was the rest-day God had made ;
But we soon found that was ruined by the eternal Church Parade.

For our Captain went a courting, and the girl that caught his eye
Was the daughter of the Preacher in the grand old church near-by ;
So it's " Polish up your buttons! get your belts and puttees on!
Shine your boots! don't be caught napping when the bugle call has
gone! "

On parade we'd stand an hour till the Captain came along ;
Then we'd march to church and feast till one o'clock on prayer and
song.
But the Good Old Man has left us! How we miss his kindly face!
But perhaps he still is preaching in a more congenial place.

Strange dénouements do occur when Fortune's currents twist and
curl ;
The Successor,—may God bless him—stole away the Captain's girl ;
And,—“ It is an evil wind that blows nobody any good ”—
Church Parades have been abolished, as we always hoped they would.
Now each Sunday brings us leisure, as the scrolls of life unfurl,
And we have to thank the Preacher—he that stole the Captain's girl.



SCOTLAND TO BE CONQUERED AND ANNEXED TO CANADA.

The discovery was made by our Teutonic foe
That the Bulldog of Britain will never let go
The part of Fair France he may have in his grip
When the foot of the Hun from her threshold shall slip.

We, too, from Canadian forests and plains
Have some of the old bulldog blood in our veins ;
We, too, are ambitious ; we have a strong grip,
On Old Scotland, and will not allow it to slip.

You may think our battalions of lumber-jacks here
Have just come to cut timber, for use in the war ;
That is only a blind to keep the coast clear
Till we bring our main forces from Canada's shore.

Right now, we hold many a strategic position,
From the Solway to Dornoch, from East to West ;
Every man is a scrapper in finest condition,
Who can knock out a moose with a blow of his fist.

When the Germans have conquered, our veterans tried,
Will make for the homeland of Wallace and Bruce ;
When we have it subdued, we'll annex it with pride
To our land of the Maple, and home of White Spruce.

SWINGING THE LEAD.

O ye who gladly bear your part in the world-engulfing strife,
Who meet each needful sacrifice of leisure or of life,
Who brave the withering blast of war, your island homes to save ;
O listen to my story of a cool and crafty knave !

Blair Mandel joined the army very much against his will ;
His conscience would not give him leave, his brother-men to kill ;
But a stern tribunal was another fact he had to face,
And summer found him at the Somme, in the clash of race with race.

Though much aggrieved that he must share in shedding human blood,
He carried on till something struck with a dull and heavy thud :
His comrades promptly rescued him, half buried in the mire,
And gave him to a red-cross crew, to nurse the vital fire.

He soon returned from hospital, appearing good as new,
And worked with more alacrity than he was wont to do :
Perhaps his scruples vanished as he caught the battle-zest ;
He seemed resigned to the war-time grind, in trenches or at rest.

One day I was amazed by him in confidence sublime,
With rod and line a-fishing in a pool of mud and slime.
In view from camp, a crowd observed the piscatorial Blair ;
Came to the spot, and asked him what he was celebrating there.

" A big trout bit just now," he said, as he swung his line ashore,
" Look! There are some of the finest fish you ever angled for! "
" What you have seen has been a bug or possibly a snake ;
No fish could live! " They laughed and jeered, but his faith they
could not shake.

He fished the flooded shell-holes and old trenches filled with ooze :
Each evening he was on the job ; not an hour did he lose.
The M.O. went one day to see what the fun was all about,
And closely scan the fisherman, so keen in quest of trout.

" Well, what luck, Mandel ? " " None at all, but I'll do better soon ;
I never did have any luck in the wrong phase of the moon."
The Doctor asked some questions in a casual sort of way,
And sent him then with some other men, for the medical board's
survey.

Discharged! His papers in his hand, he left the office door ;
" *I've caught the fish,*" he laughing said, " Good luck, boys! Au
revoir! "

He spoke too loud! Next day he came again before the board,
And ran the gauntlet of such tests as psychiatrists accord.

They tested his reflexes and the pressure in his veins ;
They examined and enquired with most exceeding pains ;
Then to his unit once again, the fisherman was sent,
And apparently his old-time fund of gaiety was spent.

Perhaps some token of the past his memory did haunt,
Or could it be, he now had caught *a fish he didn't want ?*
Soon Mandel faced a General, at a military court—
But why prolong this idle song ?—Proceedings *there* were short :
A deep hole in that mangled earth, as rose next morning's sun,
Held what was left of Mandel, when the firing squad was done.

THE KAISER'S PROGRAM.

(According to a well-known authority on secret service matters, the Kaiser held an Army Council at Potsdam in 1908, and laid before it his plans for dealing with the menace of Socialism by a war of conquest. Impressed with the possibilities of the Zeppelins, he was convinced that the time was opportune to prepare for a mighty attempt to overthrow British naval power, and enter upon a grand scheme of world conquest.)

A problem grave our country soon must face
And we must all unflinching play our part :
Heedless of danger sleeps the German race,
While a cancer foul is eating at its heart.

The rapid spread of the socialistic creed,
Whose avowed aims include the overthrow
Of throne and altar, shows the urgent need
Of measures stern to check the internal foe.

Almighty God has been an ally true
To the House of Hohenzollern, day by day ;
And after hours of fervent prayer, the clue
To this vexed problem was sent to guide my way.

God's chosen instruments are in my hand :
By Zeppelins and submarines, I trust,
We'll break that power, whose hold on every strand
Is strangling us, and beat her to the dust.

Britain, once first in invention, letters, art,
Has sunk till now she is living on the past ;
In the world-struggle she is losing heart ;
We'll lend a hand—her glory will not last.

Our gallant navy, assisted from the air,
Will wrest the trident from Britannia's hand :
When through decadent France our trumpets blare,
We'll cross the Strait, and occupy the land.

Thus I'll avenge the insult of Agadir ;
No more we'll bow to the tyrant of the sea ;
No more, proud Albion's rivalry to fear ;
While her colonies fall, like apples ripe, to me.

With victory, will internal troubles cease :
Our coffers filled with French and British gold,
We'll gain commercial supremacy with ease,
And what we gain we assuredly will hold.

If the Russians strike while we are so engaged,
Our ally, Austria, with them will deal,
Till the eagle of France and British lion are caged ;
The Russian bear our vengeance then will feel.

Like fierce Attila shall our armies strike ;
Our divided foes the onset cannot bide ;
Russia and France are slumbering alike ;
We'll sweep across them like an ocean tide.

Americans! One third are Germans true!
The rest, asleep, undisciplined, untrained ;
Three millions at the polls my bidding do :
Another colony I will soon have gained.

The smaller states of Europe shall bow down ;—
Small states are not in harmony with the age ;—
White races all shall obey the Imperial Crown,
And mark the golden age on history's page.

Lands that no ancient conqueror ever knew
Shall fall beneath the sway of Germany.
Where never Greek or Roman eagles flew
Shall sound the roar of my artillery.

Let "*Germans to the Front*" our motto be!
Civis Germanus Sum for evermore
Shall prove the sesame, on land and sea,
To honour, wealth, and power the wide world o'er.

We'll end the age-long chaos of rival states
That holds the world in fear and poverty.
All must walk as superior mind dictates,
And tremble at the power of Germany.

O Arbitration! I will arbitrate!
Disarmament! Our foes we will disarm,

When German steel rings loud at every gate,
And rivals all shall crawl beside the worm.

All races soon shall speak the German tongue ;
Our customs, laws, and Kultur must prevail ;
Weltpolitik will thrill with changes rung,
When the great Pan-German Era lifts the veil.

Some leisure hour, when other cares can rest,
Then with the Yellow Peril I will deal :
I'll press the button that will bring the test
Of Orient courage hemmed by Western steel.

And thus will I fulfil my destiny :
Meinself und Gott o'er all the world shall reign :
Our songs shall ring o'er every land and sea,
With "*Deutschland Uber Alles*" the glad refrain.

THE WAR AND ITS AFTERMATH.

When with mental vision gazing,
Where grim War its voice is raising,
Where its furious fires are blazing,
As though fanned by vengeful doom ;
Where Earth's best are bleeding, dying,
Fell Destruction round them flying,
Comrades dead beside them lying,
All must share the general gloom.

Now each home no cheer can borrow,
From the prospect of the morrow,
While the torturing steel of sorrow,
Burns into each bosom's core ;
And the world-wide conflagration
Threatens still to scourge each nation,
Till the gaunt wolf of starvation
Enters at each stricken door.

Vicious thoughts by strife inspired,
Murderous acts by war required,
Standards base in war desired,
Will leave marks beyond recall ;

Marks, the fighting disposition,
 Restlessness and lost ambition,
 Brains and brawn in weak condition,
 Aftermath of war must fall.

Nature's process, evolution,
 Spares the better constitution,
 And with iron resolution,
 Drives the weaker to the wall :
 Modern war all law outrages,
 Breaks the strong and the courageous,
 Pride and flower of all the ages ;
 Weak alone survive the call.

Still a ray the gloom is lighting,
 For that group of nations fighting,
 Clearest thinking, hardest smiting,
 Ought and surely will prevail ;
 And we see grounds for forecasting,
 Victors in harmony lasting,
 Long will keep war's demon blasting,
 Out of Civilization's pale.

Evolution in future ages,
 Shall unfold its glorious pages ;
 Upward, sure though fitful stages,
 Till Earth cycles, dead and cold :
 Mankind ever shall aspire,
 Reaching farther, climbing higher,
 Till they deem such strugglings dire,
 Grains of dross 'mid sands of gold.

THE OLD PROSPECTOR.

In the Last West, where primal force tremendous
 Upheaved the Canadian section, grand though broken,
 Of the Cordilleran earth-roof, vast, stupendous—
 All in accord with Nature's laws unspoken—

Whose mighty mass has been saw-toothed and torn
 By numerous streams with industry untiring,
 Till each, its canyon, gorge, or vale has worn,
 And decked the range with scenery inspiring :

There, through a rocky pass one summer day,
A winding, long, and dreary trail I walked
In company of a prospector, bent and gray ;
And as we went, I listened while he talked.

The scene, to me a waste of barren rock,
By him, was viewed as Nature's open book :
A story lay in every silent block,
And every crystal, fossil, glen and brook.

How brief! How paltry is man's history,
Beside the epic tale these stones relate
Of continents raised, and vanished 'neath the sea ;
And others raised, perhaps for similar fate!

They speak of marvellous types in profusion spread ;
Replaced by others that in turn gave place ;
Still in the tragedy of earth-borne dead,
A gradual upward tendency we trace.

Each mass of slate, and shale, and dolomite
He traced, in thought, since, on ocean's bed it lay.
He looked for "colours" with exceeding care,
In veins, and watercourses along the way.

Each boulder, pebble, and each flinty grain,
Included in a great conglomerate wall,
He coursed from plutonic land to ocean's plain,
And saw it rise from 'neath its watery pall.

We passed a beetling cliff of limestone gray ;
To him it spoke of mighty eons gone—
Of salt sea mussels dying day by day,
To form the rock that now we gaze upon.

The slopes that ages long had covered been
With forest green, are fire-swept and bare :
For mile on mile, black trunks alone are seen,
Erect or fallen, in confusion everywhere.

At length we reached a small and wooded vale ;
There by the brook the old man's cabin stood ;
'Midst desolation in his little dale,
Centred his life of patient hardihood.

The supper done, we sat beside the fire,
And resting there, we thought of other days ;
I asked him by what power that region dire
Had lured him there from life's more cheerful ways.

" Let it suffice to say, I may be here,
A pawn so placed by the mere whim of Fate ;
I may be one, by necessity severe
That Nature's wisdom must eliminate.

" Howe'er, the scenes of culture, wealth and ease
In which I lived through youth's impulsive hour
Have now for me no power to charm or please,
While the wilderness attracts with resistless power.

" Here by the window oftentimes I stay,
And watch the mountain trout their gambols ply,
The cougar, bear, and lynx hold harmless sway,
And deer at night come down to drink near-by.

" My remaining years with Nature I will trust,
Until like autumn leaf I disappear ;
I await the Day, as every creature must,
And hope my nemesis will find me here."

THE RIVAL HENS.

A few home-steaders living near a thriving Western town
Were discussing things of interest where they had settled down.

" My hen strayed down to the drug store one day, said farmer Brown ;

" I found her eating scattered pills that must have fallen down.

" What sort of stuff was in those pills is what I'd like to know ;
She had a monstrous appetite for half a day or so,
And then she buckled down to work and never stopped for rest,
Till—upon my word—that fine old bird had twelve eggs in her nest."

" I do not doubt that's true," said Pat, I know you would not lie ;
I've seen some strange and startling things myself in days gone by ;
I had some poultry on my farm in old Ontario ;
With open range and plenty feed, you could see the chickens grow.

" But one old hen went wandering—I tracked her down until
I found her in a sawdust pile beside a lumber mill.
It was plain, the way the sawdust flew, she'd discovered something
good ;
But all that I could see about were little bits of wood.

“Some guiding instinct brought her here—some craving probably, I thought, but was rather mystified to guess what it could be. She let me take her home without a flutter or a sound : She seemed absorbed in study deep—enwrapt in thought profound.

“All through that day and through the next, she neither ate nor slept,
But with a grave and thoughtful air, her sombre silence kept.
At evening she settled down on her accustomed nest,
And laid two planks of birch, three doors of maple at its best—
And before she went to roost beneath the night’s enshrouding cloak—
A dresser of mahogany, and six chairs of solid oak.”

MAKING A BOAT.

In a Nova Scotia valley, gay with hard-woods, spruce, and pine,—
There my fondest memories rally ; there I passed life’s rosiest time.
There in summer with my brother, till the school-term had begun,
Like the Stream, there was no other place for pastime, sport and fun.

Oh, what sport with eels and salmon ! With a boat it would be great !
But our raft of old spruce timber was a little out of date.
Oh, the fun that we were missing when the river was aflood,
And we might have rowed those hissing, whirling waters red with mud !

So we put it up to Father ; his consent we must obtain ;
But his thoughts just then were rather more concerned with fields of grain :

“You would only spoil the lumber ; run along and bunch the oats :
Possibly before next summer, I’ll find time for making boats.”

So impatiently we waited, while the fish swam up and down,
Till one morning he was slated for a two-days’ trip to town ;
So we threw our frame together—plied the hammer and the plane—
In more eager haste was never vessel built for ocean main.

When the final pin was driving, and the last seam filled with tar,
Down the road was—just arriving—Father with the old gray mare !
“Now, like Trojans ! Both together ! Let us get the thing afloat !
We will show the Old Man whether we know how to make a boat !”

Never dreadnought, yacht, or galley, rode more proudly through the foam,

Than our boat rowed up the valley, as the Old Man sauntered home.
*Though to distant shores I’ve wandered in great palaces afloat,
Brighter hours I’ve never squandered than those spent in the little boat.*

FITZGERALD'S BEAVERS.

(Though I do not claim to have been present at the beaver council here referred to, the outcome of their deliberations speaks for itself. The locality is about two miles from the old Half-Way-House on the Horsefly Road, B.C.)

Fitzgerald had a wild-hay swamp, with a small brook running through.
At the outlet he made a dam part way across the slough.
With plough and scraper it was built for permanence and strength,
But from lack of time 'twas finished only half its total length.

Now here and there along the stream are beaver colonies ;
They build their houses and control the water as they please.
They held a council to discuss Fitzgerald's enterprise,
In all its bearings, such as strength, locality and size.

At length their level-headed old Chief Engineer arose
And said : " This ranchman's plan is good, in the main, *so far as*
it goes ;

But a greater depth of water here would be of benefit
To the traffic routes for our food supply, and space for storing it."

The Mayor and the Council took their Engineer's advice,
And brought to bear all labour there with cunning artifice ;
Some went like lumber-jacks to work on timber standing nigh,
While others carried loads of mud from the flooded ground near-by.

They brought their twigs and sticks and logs, of various length and
size,

And interwove them in the dam with skill and enterprise.
Each night they worked with prudent zest, a sentry on the spot,
To signal with a splash of his tail sharp as a pistol shot.

The Ranchman's plan called for a dam direct throughout its length ;
But *they* zigzagged from bush to bush to give it greater strength ;
And when Fitzgerald came again, to work upon the site,
The beavers had the dam complete, with a foot of extra height.

A STUDY IN RACIAL DECADENCE.

The great Professor Burbason had won undying fame
Improving types of plants and hoped with man to do the same ;
He saw with deep concern, the race slowly degenerate,
So that the process would in time erase it from the slate.

Though this land of old was blessed with large and vigorous families,
The general aim of life is now the pursuit of futilities :
While rival nations swiftly grow in numbers and in strength,
We threaten to decline until we are overwhelmed, at length.

So after a profound survey of the problem from every side,
'Twas said that he had found a way to stem the ebbing tide :
By some mysterious process a new type of man was found,
Of which, to bear a family of twelve each pair was bound.

When they increased to two-score pairs, they decided all to go
To a new country where they would have plenty room to grow ;
So they crossed the sea, and a colony of their own was soon begun,
And in honour of the founder, each was called a Burbason.

Each Burbason then carried on with industry and skill ;
He made his home with Nature lone, and bent it to his will ;
And smiled to see his family grow up around him there—
Twelve girls and boys brought life's best joys, beneath their parents'
care.

The old Professor lived to see with pride and high delight,
Five hundred of his Burbasons—all vigorous and bright.
A centry more, its blessings o'er their heads had scattered wide—
One million now who to that plough had set their hands, abide.

With might and skill, and right good will, their labours they pursued ;
O'er wood and brule, they spread their rule, and Nature wild subdued.
Another score of years now bore its precious freight along—
That colony had grown to be a nation great and strong.

And ere two hundred years were gone, since that nation's founder
died,
Two thousand million Burbasons still spread like ocean tide ;

They overran all haunts of man on this terrestrial ball ;
All other races were subdued and driven to the wall.

In industry they utilised the energy galore,
Of coal and gas and wind and wave, that Nature holds in store—
Of tide, and rays of tropic sun, earth-heat and radium ;
They made the wheels of factory, and transportation hum.

They laid their lines for road and rail, from end to end direct,
Nor turned aside because they must some mountain range dissect.
For shipping, tunnels, and canals straight through each country ran,
And vessels great, their mighty freight, bore for the needs of man.

From earth, and sea, and air, resources well conserved were drawn,
To meet their ever growing wants, with vigorous brains and brawn :
They bored and mined unheard-of depths where precious metal lay ;
Ransacked each gloomy ocean cave, and bleak Antarctica.

They gardened every vacant spot, where useful plant could grow ;
They made each swamp and desert smile with life from snow to snow ;
Removed each pest and useless thing from off the face of Earth,
And spread each better plant and plan, as Science gave it birth.

Oh wondrous was their industry in Endeavour's every field !
And wonderful the products that the earth was made to yield !
But increasing at their long-established geometric rate,
'Twas plain, the race of Burbasons faced dark and dismal fate.

In two more generations they had felt the pinch of want,
And visions of the future came their peace of mind to haunt :
In a few score years this earth would not give even standing room ;
They stood upon the threshold of inevitable doom !

Here let me pause—from finishing the story I forbear :
Whether they starved or smothered from exhaustion of the air,
I leave the reader free to solve the problem as he may,
And hope this tale may turn his thoughts to some questions of the
day.

Though for lack of room in this empire and age, growth need not
cease,
Self-made conditions rob the race of its natural increase.
The lands beneath the British flag, resources amply hold
For the needs of this whole composite race expanded many fold.

The rural situation has not bettered since the day
When Goldsmith's earnest protest was expressed in golden lay :
By forestry in times of peace the thrifty German nation
Supports more lives than England's total rural population.

All history proclaims that the backbone of every race
Is in God's pure air where country joys and duties interlace :
We love the realms where Humanity's main currents surge and boil,
But no nation long can thrive that is not rooted to the soil.

While glut of wealth degenerates a numerous leisure class,
The national stamina sinks through lack of essentials for the mass.
While half the nation's men and minds futilities pursue
In vital need, work rests undone that every man can do.

Where millions cater to the gods of luxury and ease,
Bad air and houses mar the national vitality.
Remove man-made impediments and let the nation grow !
Tear off the shackles of the past—her march will not be slow !

These problems modern science has successfully attacked ;
And cleared the way for a nation's will, with a nation's strength to
act.

While Britons well may thrill with pride in our country's glorious
past ;
Let us work for the dawn of a brighter day—of progress sure and fast.

Let those whose hearts do feel the glow of patriotic fire
Strive that *this people* may achieve a destiny, broader, higher.
All honour to the man that loves the country of his birth,
But *the race* is the thing that counts—not some particular piece of
earth.

And when again this Earth shall groan beneath the surge of War,
This Empire may win victory where fields run red with gore.



THE LOWER REGIONS TRANSFORMED BY MODERN SCIENCE.

One evening in billets as I lay upon my bed
A comrade brought the *Daily News*, and a curious item read :
Some great astronomer had found a new celestial sphere
Whose mysterious light gave ground for hope that Heaven might
be there.

This matter was debated well from every point of view ;
Our thoughts were in the spirit world when the bugler blew tattoo.
While musing on the great debate in all its pros and cons,
Before me stood a life-long friend : *I had seen him killed at Mons!*

Dumfounded by the miracle, my friend relieved the strain ;—
“ I have just come from the other world to see you all again.”
“ Tell me about this mystic unknown world ; how did you fare ?
You were a wild and reckless man ; how did they treat you there ? ”

“ You saw me blown to atoms on the bloody battle-plain ;
At once I found myself on board an inter-stellar train ;
I gazed in consternation on the swiftly widening view,
Till the earth was all a glimmering ball, as the scope of my vision grew.

“ As through the ether blue we sped, the earth appeared to shrink,—
What speed we must have travelled at, 'twas a fearful thing to think ;
Ere long it disappeared from view as we saw it from afar,
And the sun itself grew smaller till it was just a twinkling star.

“ As on we went, at length there came another sphere in view,
And as we shot towards it soon to a mighty world it grew.
Once there, we found ourselves upon a sort of No Man's Land ;
Two rival kingdoms were established, one on either hand.

“ There on the right, above the turrets of a massive wall,
Ablaze with gems and gold were countless domes and spires tall.
That city in its kingdom stand on a lofty tableland,
That rises sheer from a valley vast, cloud-veiled on the other hand.

“ The entrance to that city grand was through a golden arch ;
There by a pearl-encrusted gate, a few, the Chosen, march.
To that entrance led a pathway, narrow but constructed well ;
On the left was a splendid roadway to the very brink of Hell.

" Soon in solemn silence marched we to a palace grim and grand,
Where before the Bar of Judgment, in trembling hope and fear we
stand.

There upon a screen before us, by a telepsychograph
Characters were quickly sifted, human wheat from human chaff.

" There to my infinite horror was pronounced the sinner's doom ;
In vain protest, I was hustled, sternly, quickly from the room.
In the courtyard, well surrounded by a ring of shining steel,
I was placed with squads of others that a similar fate should feel.

" Then there came a Sergeant-Major, jaws prognathous, blood-shot
eyes,

With a voice like bursts of shrapnel, iron frame and giant size.
As we gave a last despairing look towards the golden arch,
From that Sergeant-Major came the rasping order to "*Quick march*"!

" On the brink of the scarp we halted ; overboard each man was
hurled ;

There I watched them till clouds hid them on their fall to the other
world ;

Faintly, from the depths came floating—or perhaps I was misled—
Sounds as of those bodies splashing in the lake that mortals dread.

" On my turn, just as the surface of that lake I should have met,
There I found we all had landed safely in a great spring-net ;
Looking round in blank amazement on a rich and smiling land,—
Near-by stood a splendid city—life and joy on every hand—

" In the crowd that watched us falling, an old school-days friend
I found ;

' Where's that Lake of Fire ? ' I shouted : ' This all looks like solid
ground ! '

' Come to yonder park and gardens ; I'll explain to you alone ' ;
There we sat 'mongst sylvan beauty such as the Earth had never
known.

" ' Yes the place of death and terror—the dread Hell we used to
know,—

Is a land of joy and plenty, but it was not always so ;
Until modern times, those lowlands, where now countless fruit trees
bloom,

Was a lake of fire and brimstone, where vast numbers met their doom.

“ ‘ There for ages was the home of His Satanic Majesty ;
There amongst the seething sulphur, he would leap and dive with glee.
From the beetling heights above it, Broad-Road-Walkers all were
 thrown,
And none but the toughest swimmers called another day his own.

“ ‘ From that lake a blighting, blasting, fierce sirocco cursed the land,
And its ghastly work was seen in bleaching bones on every hand ;
All the vast and fertile valley, now a prosperous nation's home,
Was an arid waste where fearful venomous monsters used to roam.

“ ‘ There the hardy few survivors from Destruction's flaming lake
Their slim chances with new hardships and new perils used to take ;
But a wondrous transformation, by slow stages came at last ;
For the Earth's great men of science, in all ages of the past,

“ ‘ Were condemned through certain fundamental errors in opinions,
And with others were thrown over by the Golden City's minions ;
Then by scientific methods many of them came safe ashore,
And soon brought to bear their splendid wealth of scientific lore.

“ ‘ By newly-invented weapons, frightful monsters they did kill,
And the grateful population backed their efforts with a will ;
From far distant mountain ranges, clear, cold rivers they have turned :
Now this plain is irrigated, that with torturing thirst had burned.

“ ‘ Next, they turned with patient method to investigate the Lake ;
Soon the country's strength was striving a great Drainage Canal to
 make,
Straight through plain and mountain ranges to the distant ocean vast.
Day and night with vim they laboured, while the months and years
 flew past ;

“ ‘ When at last the job was finished, and the sizzling mass down-
 flowed,
While the nation watched in triumph ; on a wave the Old Boy rode :
He had watched in sombre silence this vast project under way,
But he made no move to stop it,—every dog must have his day.

“ ‘ Like a game old sport he travelled with the elements he loved ;
On that journey to the ocean, from his perch he never moved :
There his fate is still uncertain—perhaps he perished from the chill—
Or he may be operating in disguise amongst us still.

“ ‘ All that suffocating gas and burning brimstone proved to be
Of volcanic origin. They now are used in industry.
That deep sulphurous deposit is an asset rich and great,
For which throbbing factories clamour with hunger insatiate.

“ ‘ Now at night those noxious gasses blaze from a hundred thousand
jets ;

Now newcomers do not smother, but are caught in elastic nets.
In this virile, prosperous country one dark cloud alone is seen ;—
Not content with all these triumphs ; goaded on by ambition keen,

“ ‘ Dazzled by the radiant genius of the Great Napoleon
War upon the Golden City in a short time will be on.
Now the nation’s strength is turning out munitionments of war ;
Such appliances and weapons as were never seen before.

“ ‘ We have guns that find their target at a thousand miles or more ;
Aeroplanes in countless thousands, swift as comets o’er us soar ;
Bombs that bursting can destroy for miles around all signs of life ;
Yet our cooler, wiser statesmen view with dread the coming strife.

“ ‘ Where we have a chance of losing, it is difficult to see,
Yet the Golden City looks on calmly, unconcernedly.’
“ So I heard my schoolmate’s story ; he did not exaggerate.
In a short time, I was drafted for the service of the State.

“ ‘ Now, Old Comrade, don’t grow reckless ; ’neath war’s horrors
have a care ;

If, like me, you leave this war, you’ll soon be in a worse one there.
But my leave is nearly ended ; I must be upon the ground,
’Neath the banners of Napoleon at the fateful tocsin sound.”

“ ‘ Let me ask you a few questions ’’—but he paused not in his flight.
Starting up I gazed before me,—nothing there but the stilly night ;
And no sound around was heard except a comrade’s rasping snore,
And the distant, rumbling, grumbling, ominous voices of the War.



INTIMIDATING THE ALMIGHTY.

After a hard day's riding on a lonely Western road,
A traveller halted by a brook to prepare his night's abode.
Across the way in a meadow was a stack of wild swamp hay,
And in full view, a ranchman's home some forty chains away.
He hobbled his cayeuse, prepared some biscuits, jam and tea;
And soon with a blanket on green boughs, slept by a great fir tree.

There underneath those sheltering limbs, untroubled by the rain,
Dead to the world, he rested till the sun was high again.
Once in that silent night he heard—or was it just a dream?—
Loud peals of thunder following lightning's penetrating gleam.

While breakfasting on bacon and hot cakes by his camp-fire
There came the ranchman and his son in a state of furious ire:
“ Let me catch that fire-fiend, I'll tear the scoundrel limb from limb ”:
The traveller faced the wrathful man and gazed amazed at him.

Though old, the ranchman was still strong—a man of giant frame;
With fist up-raised presaging dire calamity he came.
A quick glance showed the stranger what he had not observed before:
The wild-hay stack of yesterday was standing there no more.

He managed to avert awhile the impending direful fate,
And both went to the smouldering ruin to investigate.
There close beside the black remains, and standing still, they found,
Though scorched and charred, an old birch-tree, split through from
top to ground.

That rare phenomenon at once the old man's attention drew;
He scrutinized it carefully—the signs full well he knew;
As his crest-fallen manner showed, the traveller had won;
And leaving him to fight it out with *The Scoundrel*, travelled on.

SAVED BY HIS DOG.

(Related by James Wiggins of Horsefly Road, B.C.)

Of my thoughts as the years go rolling, turn to scenes of a bygone time,

Of four lonely years patrolling on the Yukon Telegraph Line.

There one evening, returning from a far point on my beat,

With my gun slung on my shoulder, and a pack of fresh moose meat,

Sudden as I turned a corner round a thicket by the trail,

Face to face I met a sight that made my heart within me quail ;

On his hind legs stood a grizzly—open mouth and eyes aflame—

Helpless there I stood and trembled as the monster slowly came.

No time then to down my pack and bring the rifle into play ;

Frozen to the spot, I visioned scenes of youth in quick survey :

Then my dog sprang into action ; takes the grizzly by the heels,

And in hot pursuit he follows till the Naas's chill he feels.

Then my hair that stood on end resumed the horizontal plane,

And I got myself unharnessed, and my gun in hand again.

As he neared the shore I gave him a few shots for a *fare you well*,

Mighty well content there wasn't quite another tale to tell.

STRANGLED BY THE SPECULATOR.

" At last I have found it! A farm of my own!

Better soil or climate has never been known!

The forest and mountains contribute their charm ;

And a brooklet more precious than gold drains my farm!

" I have come with the savings of ten years of toil

To this bright land of promise to live from the soil.

There a poor man might slave all his life to obtain

A farm of his own,—he would labour in vain.

" While game birds in England are rich men's birthright,

Here they're meat for the day and a lullaby at night ;

While big game on the hills and the mountains run free
As the waters that warble their way to the sea.

“ Abundance of berries grow wild on the hills,
And the silver trout leaps in the rivers and rills ;
For fuel, and food, we have Nature’s rich store ;
Independence and freedom—what would you want more ?

“ My cabin I’ll build by the trail and the brook ;
In a few years we’ll see how this jungle will look !
True, it is a bit lonesome, but settlers come fast,
And quickly we’ll conquer this wilderness vast !

“ I worked all my life ere I crossed the white foam,
And now I’ll work harder,—I’m making a home.
And when it is ready, I’ll bring o’er the sea
A fair English girl who is waiting for me.”

He unpacks his cayeuses and lets them run free,
And pitches his tent where his home is to be.
A neighbour arrives with his saw and his fro,
And tree trunks and shakes to a cabin soon grow.

A FEW YEARS LATER.

A rough road that runs where the trail used to wind,
Leaves the days of the “ diamond ” and pack-strap behind ;
Locomotives now rumble a few miles away,
And mails that came monthly, now come every day.

Where the brule used to be is a carpet of green ;
Where stood cottonwood giants, a garden is seen ;
By the brook is a cluster of young ash, and oak ;
O’er the cabin, the ivy is spreading its cloak.

Though Nature had done all that Nature could do,
And the sweat of the settler had rendered its due,
Still were draining his strength, and eating his heart
Isolation and distance from city and mart.

ORGANIZE ON THE GARDEN CITY PLAN.

The fate of that man many thousands have shared ;
Privation and hardship for homes they have dared ;
They have come from all countries ; they are the right stuff
For the building of empire and land there's enough.

But near cities, great stretches most fertile and best
Are held for *speculation, the Curse of the West.*
So, Idle and useless, vast areas lie,
That the needs of the city should rightly supply.

And the city's progress is held back by the cost
Of the haul from afar that is needlessly lost ;
But the era is dawning when country and town
Will develop on rational plans as laid down ;

When no city home will be counted complete
Till its own garden grows something wholesome to eat ;
Till those children whose world is of walls grim and bare,
In the life-giving work of their garden can share.

But, scattered so widely our farmers now dwell,
Much effort is lost and life's comforts as well.
Though the great of the world have been bred on the soil,
Greatness is not nurtured by solitary toil.

For by nature is man a gregarious creature,
And contact with man is incentive and teacher ;
But both country and town of the future shall know
The physique of the rustic and wit of the beau.

The unorganized, random, development seen
Everywhere, modern science will soon contravene.
The future is bright—there'll be no turning back—
The Commission of Conservation is hard on the track.

THE POET OF THE FORESTRY CORPS.

(Written of Corporal Mellema, saw-filer of the 108th Company, on the occasion of the publication by him of a small volume of poems. This was my first experiment with the Muse: the Corporal says it ought to be my last.)

The poet stands in his cabin rude
But his thoughts are far away
In dreamland's mystic solitude—
In realms of the muses' sway.

Beside him flows a turbid stream ;
Near by is a sawdust pile ;
Close to his door mill whistles scream ;
Behind, is a barnyard vile ;

While round about him, far and near,
Where stately pine trees grew,
Now blackened stumps—a prospect drear—
Complete the sordid view.

But not environment, though foul,
Can quench celestial fire,
Nor patriot duties, weary toil,
His dauntless spirit tire.

The file and gauge, with enterprise
He wields, and technique fine ;
As the filings fall, ideas arise
Like jewels from a mine.

When wrapped in contemplation deep
On the world-wide stage of strife,
Or weighing with philosophic calm
The mysteries of life ;

Or when in inspiration grand
Spring thoughts that cannot die—
Resplendent from the master-hand,
Like meteors from the sky,

Celestial harmonies display ;
Earth's mysteries unfold ;
Transcendent genius lights the way
To ecstasies untold ;

And then, perchance, some woodsman rude
Shouts through the open door :—
“ This saw's no good — — — — ”
As he throws it on the floor.

The gentle poet's spirit soars
To loftiest heights, till won ;
He murmurs not, though tempests roar,
But smiles and carries on.

Far, far beyond life's transient day
On time's uncharted shore,
Immortal still in fame shall live
The Poet of the Forestry Corps.

MY SON AT THE WAR.

There's a little old man in the Forestry Corps,
Whose favourite son is away to the war.
While the war was still young, that son crossed the ocean,
And by pluck and hard work he has won swift promotion.

'Tis the old man's delight, with true fatherly pride,
To carol his praises, whatever betide ;
When he once has you cornered—his story begun—
Your one chance of escape is to break and run.

One day, as together we strolled down the street,
A city policeman we happened to meet ;
“ Good evening, Sir! 'Tis a fine starlight night—
I've a son at the war in the thick of the fight,—

“ When a battle is on he is there without fail,
Where shrapnel and bullets fly thicker than hail ;

He has fought with the Turks—he has fought at the Somme ;
He cares not for bayonet, bullet, or bomb ;

“ He has fought in the cavalry, infantry, air ;
He has flown through perils no other would dare ;
He has mounted to heights where no bird ever soared,
And come down on the foe like the wrath of the Lord.

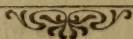
“ One day when the Huns made a mighty attack,
Our lines were all broken and prospects were black ;
Our reserves all gone or scattered too wide,
And the Germans still coming like the flow of the tide—

“ He led an attack with a squadron of 'planes—
'Twasn't long till the Germans had lost all their gains ;
He struck them so hard that soon naught could be seen,
But small pieces of men where an army had been.

“ And the best thing of all ”—but the listener had fled ;
In peril of losing a pinion, he sped.
Next we stopped at a club on our way down the street,—
“ Good evening, ladies! What have you to eat ?

“ I've a son at the war ; of late he has been
Across to visit the King and Queen.
They were fain to adopt the lad right away,
But he turned that down, and went back to the fray.

“ He's a fine sturdy boy—a Canadian true—
Nine men, before breakfast, one morning he slew—— ”
Oh! spellbound he held them, till out of the scrape,
They bolted at last, and made good their escape.
Let us wish for the best luck that Fate holds in store
For the proud little father, and “ Son at the War.”



From the Poets' Sister

Edie McDougall

Edie Mae Dougall